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Many strange things have happened in this war, aye, and stranger things will come and are coming rapidly. Six weeks ago Russia was an autocracy. She now is one of the most advanced democracies in the world.

Today we are waging the most devastating war the world has ever seen. Tomorrow, tomorrow, not perhaps distant tomorrows, war may be abolished forever from the category of human crimes.

THE MONROE DOCTRINE AND THE AMERICAN POLICY OF ISOLATION IN RELATION TO A JUST AND DURABLE PEACE

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During the one hundred years following the treaty of Ghent the United States engaged in two foreign wars: the Mexican War, which lasted from May 13, 1846, to February 2, 1848, and the Spanish War, which lasted from April 21 to August 12, 1898. The combined length of these two wars was a few days over two years. During the same period the entire American continent was singularly free from wars of importance or of long duration, either between American states or between American and European states. No other part of the world can show a record at all comparable to this. If, therefore, we are in search of bases for a just and durable peace, we should examine the public policies of America rather than of Europe.

During this century of comparative peace with other nations the foreign policy of the United States has been guided by two great principles, the Monroe Doctrine and the policy of political isolation or the avoidance of entangling alliances. The Monroe Doctrine is a guarantee of the *status quo*, the only principle on which the peace of the world can securely rest. The policy of isolation means the absence in time of peace of alliances which have been a necessary condition to all great wars. If there had been no European alliance in July, 1914, and if the several countries, free from the obligations which such alliances impose, had been able to choose the course dictated by their highest interests, does any one believe that there would have been a world war? Is it going too far to assert that the

future peace of the world depends upon a world-wide acceptance of these two American principles: no disturbance of the *status quo* by any one state or group of states for selfish ends, and no permanent alliances between states or groups of states? So far, therefore, from abandoning the Monroe Doctrine and our historic policy of avoiding entangling alliances, President Wilson proposed in his address to the Senate on January 22, 1917, that these two American policies should be internationalized and given world-wide application. In holding out the expectation that the United States would join the other civilized nations of the world in guaranteeing a permanent peace he said:

I am proposing, as it were, that the nations should with one accord adopt the doctrine of President Monroe as the doctrine of the world: that no nation should seek to extend its polity over any other nation or people, but that every people should be left free to determine its own polity, its own way of development, unhindered, unthreatened, unafraid, the little along with the great and powerful.

I am proposing that all nations henceforth avoid entangling alliances which would draw them into competitions of power, catch them in a net of intrigue and selfish rivalry, and disturb their own affairs with influences intruded from without. There is no entangling alliance in a concert of power. When all unite to act in the same sense and with the same purpose all act in the common interest and are free to live their own lives under a common protection.

The President has here stated, it seems to me, the two essential principles on which the future peace of the world must rest. He has clothed them in American habiliments so as to avoid the appearance of breaking too violently with the traditions of the past. Nevertheless the attempt to internationalize these two principles of our foreign policy involves the risk of sacrificing them altogether, and many Americans will undoubtedly oppose what will be considered an idealistic effort to extend to the rest of the world the benefits of a policy which hitherto we have enjoyed exclusively.

On the contrary I am convinced as the result of the changes of the last twenty years that the time is at hand when we must either abandon the Monroe Doctrine altogether, or resort to an alliance to maintain it, or to some form of world federation to extend it. For nearly a century we have upheld without an army, and until recently without a large navy, a policy which has been described as an impertinence to Latin America and a standing defiance to Europe. Has the Monroe Doctrine rested on moral force alone, or, if not, by what magic have we defended it so effectively against

all the world without the exercise of physical force? Few Americans have ever considered this question. Notwithstanding the many discussions of the Monroe Doctrine that we have had in recent years, this phase of the subject has been largely neglected. As a matter of fact the maintenance of the Monroe Doctrine in the past has been due not to our own might, but wholly to the balance of power in Europe. Some European power would long ago have come in and called our bluff, that is, made us give up the doctrine or fight for it, had it not been for the well-grounded fear that some other European power would start an attack in the rear. Every time that the Monroe Doctrine has been called in question conditions outside of America have determined the issue. Let us review briefly some of these instances.

In the first place, the original declaration of President Monroe would have had little effect, but for the known attitude of England and the strength of her navy. The international situation at that time was a very interesting one. When Napoleon overthrew the Spanish monarchy in 1808 and placed his brother Joseph on the throne, the colonies of Spain refused to recognize the new sovereign and, as the combined fleets of France and Spain had been destroyed by Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, Napoleon and Joseph were unable to extend their authority over Spanish America. The Spanish colonies thus drifted into independence in spite of themselves. Released from an unreasonable and oppressive colonial system they set up provisional governments, and immediately threw their ports open to English and American vessels. An extensive trade soon sprang up, and with English and American goods came English and American ideas. Spain's colonies thus passed through a period of enlightenment which shaped their future action. When, after the overthrow of Napoleon, their lawful sovereign Ferdinand VII was restored to his throne, he failed to realize the changes that had taken place and undertook to refasten on the colonies the old colonial system and to shut out all foreign commerce. The colonies naturally resisted and thus began the war of independence. By 1822 Spanish authority had been everywhere overthrown, and the United States formally recognized the independence of the Spanish-American republics.

Meanwhile the powers of Europe had held a series of congresses, beginning with that of Vienna, for the purpose of undoing

the work of Napoleon, restoring as far as possible the old order, and suppressing new attempts at revolution in Piedmont, Naples and Spain. At Verona in 1822 they decided to send a French army into Spain for the purpose of suppressing the new constitution and restoring Ferdinand to absolute power. Against this intervention in the internal affairs of Spain, Wellington, who represented England at the conference, protested, and when his protest was not heeded he formally withdrew. This marked the final withdrawal of England from the grand alliance which had overthrown Napoleon. The British government considered the question of opposing by force the French invasion of Spain, but finally decided not to act. By the summer of 1823 the Spanish constitutionalists were overthrown and Ferdinand was restored to absolute power. Absolutism reigned once more in western Europe.

The reactionary powers, which constituted the so-called Holy Alliance, felt, however, that their work was incomplete so long as Spain's colonies remained unsubdued. They decided, therefore, to hold a conference in Paris to consider the question of assisting Spain to recover her revolted provinces. It was at this crisis that George Canning, the British foreign secretary, called into conference Dr. Richard Rush, the American minister at London, and proposed that England and the United States form an alliance to prevent the proposed intervention of the Holy Allies in Spanish America. England's interest in the matter was mainly commercial; ours mainly political. After mature deliberation President Monroe and his cabinet wisely decided that, in view of the fact that the attitude of England was known to the powers of Europe, an independent declaration on the part of the United States would have all the effect of an alliance without any of its embarrassing features. He, therefore, delivered in his annual message to Congress a broadside declaration against European intervention in America, which did not except even England. Canning was much chagrined. He had proposed an Anglo-American alliance, and in reply the United States made a declaration which he had the foresight to see might be used against England itself in the future. Furthermore the attitude of the British government was known only to the chancelleries of Europe, while Monroe's declaration was made to the world at large. When, therefore, the European powers dropped the project of intervention in America the United States got all the

credit. A few months later England formally recognized the independence of the Spanish-American republics, and Canning made his famous boast on the floor of the House of Commons that he had "called the new world into existence to redress the balance of the old."

The most serious strain to which the Monroe Doctrine was ever subjected was the attempt of Louis Napoleon during the American Civil War to establish the empire of Maximilian in Mexico under French auspices. He was clever enough to induce England and Spain to go in with him in 1861 for the avowed purpose of collecting the claims of their subjects against the government of Mexico. Before the joint intervention had gone very far, however, these two powers became convinced that Napoleon had ulterior designs and withdrew their forces. Napoleon's Mexican venture was deliberately calculated on the success of the Southern Confederacy. Hence, his friendly relations with the Confederate commissioners and the talk of an alliance between the Confederacy and Maximilian backed by the power of France. Against each successive step taken by France in Mexico, Mr. Seward, Lincoln's secretary of state, protested. As the Civil War drew to a successful conclusion his protests became more and more emphatic. Finally, in the spring of 1866, the United States government began massing troops on the Mexican border and Mr. Seward sent what was practically an ultimatum to the French Emperor; he requested to know when the long promised withdrawal of the French troops would take place. Napoleon replied, fixing the dates for their withdrawal in three separate detachments.

American historians have usually attributed Napoleon's backdown to Seward's diplomacy supported by the military power of the United States, which was, of course, greater at that time than at any other time in our history. All this undoubtedly had its effect on Napoleon's mind, but I am convinced that conditions in Europe just at that particular moment had an even greater influence in causing him to abandon his Mexican scheme. Within a few days of the receipt of Seward's ultimatum Napoleon was informed of Bismarck's determination to force a war with Austria over the Schleswig-Holstein controversy. Napoleon realized that the territorial aggrandizement of Prussia, without any corresponding gains by France, would be a serious blow to his prestige and in fact

endanger his throne. He at once entered upon a long and hazardous diplomatic game in which Bismarck outplayed him and eventually forced him into war. In order to have a free hand to meet the European situation he decided to yield to the American demands. As the European situation developed he decided to withdraw his troops before the dates agreed upon and to leave Maximilian to his fate. Thus the Monroe Doctrine was vindicated!

Let us take next President Cleveland's intervention in the Venezuelan boundary dispute. Here surely was a clear and spectacular vindication of the Monroe Doctrine which no one can discount. Let us briefly examine the facts. Some 30,000 square miles of territory on the border of Venezuela and British Guiana were in dispute. Venezuela, a weak and helpless state, had offered to submit the question to arbitration. Great Britain, powerful and overbearing, refused. After a long correspondence, ably conducted by Secretary Olney, had failed to move the British government, President Cleveland decided to intervene. In a message to Congress in December, 1896, President Cleveland reviewed the controversy at length, declared that the acquisition of territory in America on the part of a European power through the arbitrary advance of a boundary line was a clear violation of the Monroe Doctrine, and asked Congress for an appropriation to pay the expenses of a commission which he proposed to appoint for the purpose of determining the true boundary, which he said it would then be our duty to uphold. Lest there should be any misunderstanding as to his intentions he solemnly added: "In making these recommendations I am fully alive to the responsibility incurred and keenly realize all the consequences that may follow." Congress promptly voted the appropriation.

Here was a bold and unqualified defiance of England. No one before had ever trod so roughly on the British lion's tail with impunity. The English-speaking public on both sides of the Atlantic was stunned and amazed. Outside of diplomatic circles few persons were aware that any subject of controversy between the two countries existed, and no one had any idea that it was of a serious nature. Suddenly the two nations found themselves on the point of war. After the first outburst of indignation, the storm passed; and before the American boundary commission could make its report England signed an arbitration agreement with Venezuela. Some persons

after looking in vain for an explanation have concluded that Lord Salisbury's failure to deal more seriously with Mr. Cleveland's affront to the British government was due to his sense of humor.

But here again the true explanation is to be found in events that were happening in other quarters of the globe. Cleveland's Venezuelan message was sent to Congress on December 17. At the end of the year came Dr. Jameson's raid into the Transvaal and on the third of January the German Kaiser sent his famous telegram of congratulation to Paul Kruger. The wrath of England was suddenly diverted from America to Germany, and Lord Salisbury avoided a rupture with the United States over a matter which after all was not of such serious moment to England in order to be free to deal with a question involving much greater interests in South Africa. The Monroe Doctrine was none the less effectively vindicated.

In 1902 Germany made a carefully planned and determined effort to test out the Monroe Doctrine and see whether we would fight for it. You will remember that in that year Germany, England, and Italy made a naval demonstration against Venezuela for the purpose of forcing her to recognize as valid certain claims of their citizens. How England was led into the trap is still a mystery, but the Kaiser thought that he had her fixed, that if England once started in with him she could not turn against him. But he had evidently not profited by the experience of Napoleon III in 1861. Through the mediation of Herbert Bowen, the American minister, Venezuela agreed to recognize in principle the claims of the foreign powers and to arbitrate the amount. England and Italy accepted this offer and withdrew their squadrons. Germany, however, remained for a time obdurate. This much was known at the time.

A rather sensational account of what followed next has recently been made public in Thayer's *Life and Letters of John Hay*. Into the merits of the controversy that arose over Thayer's statement of the Roosevelt-Holleben interview it is not necessary to enter. The significant fact, that Germany withdrew from Venezuela under pressure, is, I am satisfied, established. Admiral Dewey stated publicly that the entire American fleet was assembled at the time under his command in Porto Rican waters ready to move at a moment's notice. Why did Germany back down from her position? Her navy was supposed to be at least as powerful as ours. The reason why the Kaiser concluded not to measure strength with

the United States was that England had accepted arbitration and withdrawn her support and he did not dare attack the United States with the British navy in his rear. Again the nicely adjusted European balance prevented the Monroe Doctrine from being put to the test of actual war.

It must be abundantly evident to all that our historic policy of isolation has been rendered possible only by the existence of the balance of power in Europe. We have never been too weak to tip the scales. But in recent years a new element has entered into the international situation and that element is the naval and military power of Japan. Formerly we had the European balance *plus* the United States. Recently we have had the European balance *plus* the United States *plus* Japan. Scarcely had the United States acquired Hawaii and the Philippines and committed itself to the open door policy in China when Japan emerged victorious from the war with Russia as a full-fledged world power ready to contest with us supremacy in the Pacific. American diplomacy, hitherto limited in its aims to the American continent, was suddenly confronted with complex problems which were world-wide in their ramifications. The Anglo-Japanese alliance has been in effect a guarantee of peace between Japan and the United States, for England would never consent to back Japan in a war with us. But the Anglo-Japanese alliance appears to be doomed. Japan and Russia have recently formed an alliance, the exact terms of which have not been made public, but which undoubtedly aims at the further exploitation of Manchuria and the defeat of the open door policy in a large part of China. If the new Russo-Japanese alliance supplants the older alliance with England, as now seems likely, our position in the Pacific will be very seriously weakened. The Japanese shift from England to Russia will naturally force England and the United States into closer accord. How far the Russian revolution will weaken the Russo-Japanese alliance cannot yet be foreseen.

If the old system of alliances and balances of power is to prevail after the war, we shall have not a revival of the old European balance, but a new world balance, England, France, and the United States forming the basis of one group, Russia and Japan of the other, with Germany for the time being isolated, like France after the overthrow of Napoleon. Such a condition would mean the indefinite continuance of large armaments, secret diplomacy, and endless

intrigue. The only other possibility is that before the war ends Germany will weld the opposing powers into such a firm league that peace will not dissolve it but rather transform it into some form of permanent world federation. This is the hope of mankind, and the more closely we ally ourselves with England, France, and democratic Russia, the more surely will this dream of a federation of the world become a reality.

It is useless to advocate a strict adherence to the traditions of the fathers. The old order has already passed away, though some of our representatives in the halls of Congress are reluctant to recognize the fact. The United States stands already committed to world-wide democracy and internationalism. Hitherto we have stood defensively for these principles and we have been willing to fight for them only in America. We are now to fight for their universal recognition. President Monroe's declaration in favor of guaranteeing to free states the right of self-development will be given a world-wide application, and the American policy of avoiding entangling alliances will become the cornerstone of the new league. On no other basis can we go into a league to enforce peace. We must not be the buffer between alliances and ententes. The other states must go into the league on the same basis that we go in on, that is, without any treaty obligations to any other power or group of powers within the league. Both the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution of the United States provided that no state should enter into any alliances. The adoption by all the great powers of the American policy of isolation should be the first step toward a League to Enforce Peace or any sort of world-confederation.

We may not at first be able to prevent ententes, but we can and should prohibit alliances. The alliance has always been the chief weapon of autocracy. Democracies are going to decide issues as they arise on their merits and not tie their hands in advance. No government can take away from a democracy its right in an emergency to declare for war or peace. Even the British government in July, 1914, could give no definite guarantees as to what course England would pursue in the event of war between Germany and France.

After the war, then, our choice lies between a world balance of power based on two great alliances, in one of which we must take our place, or some form of world confederation; in other words,

between *two* leagues or *one*. Can any one have any doubt as to which system is preferable? The one means militarism and the economic burden of even larger armaments than the world has yet seen; the other means international democracy, responsible diplomacy, and, eventually, a just and durable peace.